(b) and (c) M/s Gujarat State Forest Development Corporation, Vadodara supplied 15,000 cum of wooden sleepers vide contract dated 2.3.93. Sleepers supplied against this contract to the Northern Railway were found defective.

Out of the total quantity of 15000 cum, 2200 cum (15,890 sleepers) were supplied to Northern Railway Construction Organization. From this lot, 8162 Nos. of sleepers were received by Northern Railway in August, 1995. At that time, on receipt of a complaint, all the available 6561 Nos. of sleepers were checked and out of these, 6016 sleepers were found defective.

In this matter, three railway officials were considered responsible and disciplinary action under Discipline & Appeal Rules has been taken in consultation with the Central Vigilance Commission.

Besides the railway officials, some other non-railway agencies are also involved. However, in order to determine their criminal involvement, the case has been referred to the Central Bureau of Investigation for detailed investigation. The CBI has since registered the case and the investigation is in progress.

Train Accidents

512. SHRI ANIL SHARMA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of train accidents which took place during 1998 and 1999, upto November, 1999 year-wise and zone-wise;

(b) whether any enquiries were conducted in this behalf, if so the details thereof; and

(c) the measures Government have taken to curb train accidents and to provide safety to the passengers.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVUAY SINGH): (a) Number of consequential accidents:

Railway	1998-99	1999-2000
		(upto October, 1999)
Central Railway	68	48
Eastern Railway	31	20
Northern Railway	54	41
North Eastern Railway	23	16
Northeast Frontier Railway	27	41
Southern Railway	59	26
South Central Railway	45	27
South Eastern Railway	55	21
Western Railway	26	20
Konkan Railway Corporation	9	2
Total	397	262

(b) Each and every accident is being inquired into either by Chief Commissioner/ Commissioner of Railway Safety or Railway Officials depending upon the gravity of the accident. During 1998-99,34 accidents were inquired by the Commission of Railway Safety and in 1999-2000 so far, 24 accidents have been/are being inquired by the Commission of Railway Safety.

(c) The following steps have been taken to curb train accidents:

1. The work of track circuiting has been accelerated on the trunk routes and other important main lines.

2. Modification of the signaling circuitry is being carried out to minimize chances of human errors in causing accidents.

3. Auxiliary warning system for giving advance warning about 'signal at danger' to the driver of the running train has been commissioned on Mumbai suburban sections.

4. Railway Board has cleared a pilot project for introduction of Auxiliary Warning System (AWS) on Tughlaqabad-Mathura section of Central railway on trial basis.

5. Walkie-Talkie sets have been supplied to Drivers and Guards of all Passenger carrying trains. The same is presently being supplied to Drivers and Guards of goods trains also and the same is likely to be completed by 31st March, 2000.

6. There has been progressive increase in use of Tie Tamping and ballast cleaning machines for track maintenance.

7. For monitoring track geometry and running characteristics of the track, sophisticated track recording cars, oscillograph cars and portable accelerometer are being progressively used.

8. For detecting rail fractures and weld failure 96 more double rail Ultra Sonic Flaw Detectors are being procured.

9. Maintenance facilities for coaches and wagons have been modernised and upgraded at many depots.

10. To prevent cases of cold breakage of axles, ROH Depots have been equipped with ultrasonic testing equipment for detection of flaws in the axles.

11. Whistle boards/speed breakers and road signs have been provided at unmanned level crossings and visibility for drivers has been improved.

12. Audio-visual publicity campaigns to educate road users on how to make a safe crossing are conducted.

13. Steps have been taken to prevent inflammable and explosive materials from being carried in passenger trains.

14. Periodic Safety Audit of different divisions by inter-disciplinary teams from zonal headquarters has been introduced.

15. Training facilities for drivers, guards and staff connected with train operation have been modernized including use of simulators for training of drivers.

16. Refresher courses are regularly organized at specified intervals.

17. Performance of the staff connected with train operations is being constantly monitored and those found deficient are sent for crash training.

18. Periodical safety drives are conducted to inculcate safety consciousness among the staff.

Rail Accidents Due to Human Error

513. SHRI BALWANT SINGH
RAMOOWALIA: SHRI KAPIL SIBAL:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that more than eighty percent of the total rail accidents during the last decade took place due to carelessness of the railway employees; if so, the details in this regard;

(b) if not, what are the facts in this regard and what are the other reasons, alongwith the percentage of accidents which took place on account of them; and

(c) whether any steps have been taken by the Government to bring about alertness and accountability in the Railway employees; if so, the details thereof.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) No, Sir.

(b) During the decade 1989-90 to 1998-1999, the perecentage of consequential accidents due to different reasons was as under:—

Failure of railway staff	—	67.98%
Failure of other than Railway staff	—	13.15
Failure of equipment	—	10.70
Sabotage	—	2.96%
Combination of Factors	—	0.63%
Incidental	—	3.15%
Not established	_	1.39%